

## Exhibit 27

## PRE-DECISIONAL/DELIBERATIVE

[Date]

## DECISION

## MEMORANDUM FROM THE SECRETARY

FROM: Component Head Name  
Title

SUBJECT: **Boldfaced; no acronyms in subject; do not underline**

**Purpose:** Venezuela's designation for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) will expire April 2, 2025. At least 60 days before a TPS designation expires, the Secretary, after consultation with appropriate U.S. Government agencies, is required to review the conditions in a country designated for TPS to determine whether the conditions supporting the designation continue to be met, and, if so, the length of an extension of the designation.<sup>1</sup>

**TPS Overview:** Venezuela has two existing designations for TPS. Venezuela was initially designated for TPS on March 9, 2021 on the basis of extraordinary and temporary conditions that prevented nationals of Venezuela from returning in safety.<sup>2</sup> The TPS designation was extended for 18 months on September 8, 2022.<sup>3</sup> On October 3, 2023, the TPS designation was extended for 18 months and separately redesignated for 18 months<sup>4</sup> resulting in two separate Venezuela TPS designations. The 2021 designation of Venezuela for TPS (Venezuela 2021) extended TPS through September 10, 2025.<sup>5</sup> The 2023 designation (Venezuela 2023) extended TPS through April 2, 2025. On January 10, 2025, the 2023 designation of Venezuela for TPS was extended for 18 months, from April 3, 2025, through October 2, 2026.

There are currently approximately 584,700<sup>6</sup> beneficiaries and approximately 77,500<sup>7</sup> pending initial applications under Venezuela's TPS designations. [Additionally, a small number of individuals have re-registered under the January 10, 2025 extension of the Venezuela 2023 designation and have been issued Employment Authorization Documents with a October 2, 2026 expiration date.]

**Commented [AE1]:** Do not have this data yet.

**Description of Country Conditions:** Venezuela was initially designated for TPS due to a severe humanitarian emergency marked by an economic contraction, deepening poverty, reduced access to

<sup>1</sup> See Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) sec. 244(b)(3)(A). See also Attachment A: Temporary Protected Status Legal Authority.

<sup>2</sup> See *Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status and Implementation of Employment Authorization for Venezuelans Covered by Deferred Enforced Departure*, 86 FR 13574 (Mar. 9, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> See *Extension of the Designation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 87 FR 55024 (Sept. 8, 2022).

<sup>4</sup> See *Extension and Redesignation of Venezuela for Temporary Protected Status*, 88 FR 68130 (Oct. 3, 2023).

<sup>5</sup> A review of the conditions supporting the designation of TPS for Venezuela 2021 is required by July 12, 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Estimate as of December 5, 2024.

<sup>7</sup> Estimate as of December 5, 2024.

food and medicine, a collapse in basic services, fuel shortages, human rights abuses and political repression, crime and violence, and increased human mobility and displacement. These conditions persist, but with noted improvements in several areas.

### **Economy**

Sources indicate that Venezuela is experiencing moderate economic recovery and growth following years of financial difficulties.<sup>8</sup> Venezuela had “an average annual growth of 4% in 2021 to 2023,” according to “an economist at the Venezuelan economic firm, Ecoanalitica.”<sup>9</sup> Sources also indicate that the Venezuelan government “has had some success in curbing formerly sky-high inflation,” with annual inflation falling “to around 50% over the last year as the government restricted credit, held the exchange rate steady and curbed public spending.”<sup>10</sup> The Maduro government has adopted a series of economic reforms that have led to a “reduction in year-on-year inflation, a recovery of purchasing power, and some improvement in trade.”<sup>11</sup>

### **Public Health**

There was incremental improvement in the life expectancy of Venezuelans, from 2000 to 2024.<sup>12</sup> The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) highlighted the Venezuelan government’s “efforts to address infectious diseases through sensitization programmes across the national territory and strengthening of epidemiological surveillance capacities.”<sup>13</sup> OHCHR also mentioned that the “revamping of the vaccination programme, with the support of the United Nations International Child’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), contributed to declaring Venezuela free of measles in November 2023.”<sup>14</sup>

### **Access to Basic Services (including Electricity, Water, & Fuel)**

<sup>8</sup> Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela experiences an economic recovery in times of electoral uncertainty, *El País* (Spa.), Jul. 22, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/economy-and-business/2024-07-22/venezuela-experiences-an-economic-recovery-in-times-of-electoral-uncertainty.html> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

<sup>9</sup> Why Venezuela is no longer in freefall, *The Indicator* from Planet Money, National Public Radio (NPR), May 8, 2024, available at: <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/1197964529> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

<sup>10</sup> Mayela Armas, Venezuela inflation has cooled - but voters say they still can't make ends meet, *Reuters*, Jul. 23, 2024, available at: <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/venezuela-inflation-has-cooled-voters-say-they-still-can-t-make-ends-meet-2024-07-23/> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

<sup>11</sup> Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela grapples with economic collapse, *El País*, Jan. 17, 2025, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2025-01-18/venezuela-grapples-with-economic-collapse.html> (last access Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>12</sup> Pan American Health Organization, Venezuela – Country Profile, Sept. 24, 2024, available at: <https://hia.paho.org/en/country-profiles/venezuela> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>13</sup> Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jun. 28, 2024, pg. 4, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/situation-human-rights-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5663-advance-unedited-version> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

<sup>14</sup> Situation of human rights in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Jun. 28, 2024, pg. 4, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/venezuela-bolivarian-republic/situation-human-rights-bolivarian-republic-venezuela-report-united-nations-high-commissioner-human-rights-ahrc5663-advance-unedited-version> (last visited Aug. 20, 2024).

Venezuela “experiences regular power outages,”<sup>15</sup> while “interruptions in electrical service” are reportedly “common.”<sup>16</sup> However, reports indicate that in the last six months, power outages have diminished. “Many of the energy problems have subsided as the South American nation’s economy has stabilized, high inflation has eased and a de facto dollarization has reduced shortages of imported goods.”<sup>17</sup>

### **Education**

In October 2024, Maduro announced a plan to provide improvements for teachers and the educational system.<sup>18</sup> The plan includes a “digital credit-based purchasing program for acquiring goods, a new healthcare plan, coverage for urban transportation, and a monthly subsidy that includes food bags. Additionally, the country’s network of public schools, which have deteriorated significantly in recent years, will undergo a comprehensive maintenance plan, for which Maduro has requested logistical assistance from the Armed Forces.”<sup>19</sup>

### **Political Crisis**

Following the most recent Presidential election in Venezuela in which President Maduro agreed to work toward a democratic election, the U.S. White House granted a permit for Chevron to operate in Venezuela.<sup>20</sup>

### **Crime & Insecurity**

Venezuela was once considered the most dangerous country in Latin America.<sup>21</sup> However, “a discernible reduction in the overall levels of violence could be observed” in 2023 and 2024.<sup>22</sup> Various factors behind the apparent decline in crime include the country’s “ongoing economic crisis,” which has reportedly reduced “opportunities for extortion and ransom kidnappings,” and led

<sup>15</sup> Venezuela Country Security Report, Overseas Security Advisory Council (OSAC), U.S. Department of State, last updated Mar. 26, 2024, available at: <https://www.osac.gov/Content/Report/3499e62-2161-412d-bfb-1e752539fbfb> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

<sup>16</sup> Clare Ribando Seelke, Venezuela: Political Crisis and U.S. Policy, Congressional Research Service (CRS), updated Sep. 1, 2023, pg. 1, available at: <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF10230> (last visited Aug. 23, 2024).

<sup>17</sup> Associate Press, Major power outage hits Venezuela’s capital, with Maduro government blaming ‘sabotage,’ Aug. 30, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-power-outage-e-b8f412456bdbba9c9e2fb17039ba4cc9> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>18</sup> Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El País, Oct. 10, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-10-10/venezuela-calls-on-retired-teachers-to-return-to-schools-amid-staff-shortages.html> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>19</sup> Alonso Moleiro, Venezuela calls on retired teachers to return to school amid staff shortages, El País, Oct. 10, 2024, available at: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2024-10-10/venezuela-calls-on-retired-teachers-to-return-to-schools-amid-staff-shortages.html> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>20</sup> Regina García Cano, US rejects Venezuelan President Maduro’s reelection, but keeps financial lifeline for his government, Associated Press, January 18, 2025, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-maduro-oil-license-chevron-opposition-edmundo-4fe1b86da38a46b672090c2155a9b10> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>21</sup> Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

<sup>22</sup> Annual Report Violence 2023, Venezuelan Violence Observatory (OVV), Dec. 28, 2023, pg. 30, available at: <https://observatoriodeviolencia.org.vc/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/OVV-Violence-in-Venezuela-Annual-Report-2023.pdf> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024); Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

Venezuelan criminal groups to “infiltrate Venezuelan diasporas settled in other Latin American countries.”<sup>23</sup> The “monopolization of violence in some regions” by “non-state armed groups,” as well as pacts between Maduro representatives and some criminal groups, have also reportedly contributed to improved perceptions of security in certain areas.<sup>24</sup>

#### National Interest of the United States

“As of November 2020, more than 5.4 million refugees and migrants from Venezuela” were outside of Venezuela.<sup>25</sup> Recent estimates indicate that there are over “7.7 million Venezuelan refugees and migrants worldwide, of which 84% (6.5 million) are in Latin America and the Caribbean.”<sup>26</sup> Challenges, such as poor treatment and lack of opportunities, faced by Venezuelan nationals in host countries “have led to an increase in the mass and continuous movements of Venezuelan nationals from one country to the other in search of asylum or settlement.”<sup>27</sup> In 2023, at least 328,000 Venezuelans – more than double the previous year – took the treacherous Darién Gap route to Central America; most of them trying to reach the United States.<sup>28</sup>

This migration phenomenon continues to cause a range of problems in the United States. For example, a Venezuelan gang known as *Tren de Aragua* has successfully projected its power abroad.<sup>29</sup> In the United States, the gang has been blamed for sex trafficking, drug smuggling, police shootings, and the exploitation of migrants, and the United States has sanctioned the gang and placed it on a list of transnational criminal organizations.<sup>30</sup>

#### Termination Determination

Conditions in Venezuela remain challenging, but notable improvements indicate that the conditions that precipitated the initial TPS designation no longer continue. Venezuela no longer continues to

<sup>23</sup> Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

<sup>24</sup> Venezuela Investigative Unit, Why Is Venezuela’s Crime Rate Falling?, InSight Crime, May 28, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/news/venezuela-crime-rate-falling/> (last visited Sep. 3, 2024).

<sup>25</sup> Regional Refugee and Migrant Response Plan, January – December 2021, R4V, available at: <https://mrir.r4v.info/mrir2021/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>26</sup> Venezuela Situation, Global Appeal 2024, UNHCR, available at: <https://reporting.unhcr.org/venezuela-situation-global-appeal-2024> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>27</sup> Annual Report 2023 - Chapter IV.B - Venezuela, Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), Apr. 25, 2024, pg. 737, available at:

[https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023\\_Cap\\_4B\\_Venezuela\\_ENG.PDF](https://www.oas.org/en/iachr/docs/annual/2023/chapters/IA2023_Cap_4B_Venezuela_ENG.PDF) (last visited Sep. 4, 2024); Gabriela Mesones Rojo and Iván Reyes, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, Jun. 25, 2024, available at:

<https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last visited Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>28</sup> Gabriela Mesones Rojo, Hunger, healthcare, and schools: Reasons to leave Venezuela (along with a Maduro poll win), The New Humanitarian, June 25, 2024, available at:

<https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2024/06/25/hunger-healthcare-schools-reasons-leave-venezuela-maduro-poll-win> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>29</sup> InSight Crime, Tren de Aragua, July 12, 2024, available at: <https://insightcrime.org/venezuela-organized-crime-news/tren-de-aragua/> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

<sup>30</sup> Joshua Goodman, Tren de Aragua gang started in Venezuela’s prisons and now spreads fear in the US, Associated Press, Sept. 24, 2024, available at: <https://apnews.com/article/tren-de-aragua-gang-venezuela-us-a12c8fee9dc4a0ca73769ea893e09e53> (last accessed Jan. 28, 2025).

meet the statutory requirements for its TPS designation. As such, the statute requires that the TPS designation be terminated. Termination ends TPS benefits for existing Venezuelan TPS beneficiaries. Upon the termination of TPS benefits, former beneficiaries without another immigration status or authorization to remain would no longer have permission to work and remain in the United States. They may, however, apply for any other immigration benefits for which they may be otherwise eligible (e.g., asylum, lawful permanent residence).

**Effective Date**

The effective date of the termination is [DATE - Note that the effective date of termination may not be earlier than 60 days after the date the *Federal Register* notice announcing the termination is published or, if later, the expiration of the most recent previous extension]. There is no transition or wind-down period, pending applications will not be adjudicated, and current beneficiaries may not apply to extend their employment authorization documentation past the effective date of termination.